26-month frameup case dropped against 2 in L.A.

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LOS ANGELES, Dec. 8 — During the pre-dawn hours of Oct. 2, 1969, federal agents raided the homes of Donald Freed and Shirley Sutherland and arrested them on a charge of possession of dangerous weapons (hand grenades).

Twenty six months later a special prosecutor for the Department of Justice moved to drop the charges, as the case was to be brought to trial before Federal Judge Warren F. Ferguson.

Luke McKissack, attorney for Mrs. Sutherland, called the government case "an unbelievable monument to governmental tyranny and invasion of constitutional right of privacy, originating with the infiltrations of a civil libertarian organization (of which Mr. Freed and Mrs. Sutherland were members) by an ex-Green Beret, present CIA agent James Jarett, whose government-authorized function was to attempt to goad genuinely concerned citizens into acts of violence, and eventually encompassing police theft of documents from the defense, burglarizing the defense investigator's apartment, destruction of crucial evidence and wiretapping attorneys' conversation."

The Citizens Research and Investigating Committee which called the press conference following the court action described it a victory for all people in their fight against "official lawlessness."

Don Freed and Shirley Sutherland were active members of the Friends of the Panthers. Freed is a prominent autor and she is active in the anti-war movement.

On Oct. 2, 1969, Los Angeles police and federal agents raided their homes and in Freed's living room the government alleged the agents found an unopened box of hand grenades.

Judge Ferguson dismissed all charges against the defendants on Feb. 16, 1970.

The U.S. attorney appealed the court dismissal of the charges, and won it. Eventually the trial was rescheduled for Dec. 1, when Special Prosecutor Dennis E. Kinnard made his dramatic move to drop the charges.